

South Llano  
Watershed Alliance  
Watershed Week  
in Review

May 16, 2015



City of Llano turns off the tap



*Dead fish below Llano River  
Dam*

This morning, the Llano River through the City of Llano is flowing over 200 cubic feet per second (cfs). But last Saturday told a drastically different story. What happened?

In February, the newsletter reported that the Llano City Reservoir was being lowered in order to dredge material from the reservoir and increase storage capacity. On May 7<sup>th</sup>, dredging activities ceased and the City began refilling the reservoir, **closing both gates on the dam.**

As a result, in less than 24 hours, river flows fell from 60 cfs to **about 0.5 cfs**, as measured by the US Geological Survey.

The consequences: river channels void of flow, and in some areas, dead fish. Fortunately by Sunday, the reservoir had completely refilled and flows returned to the river downstream.

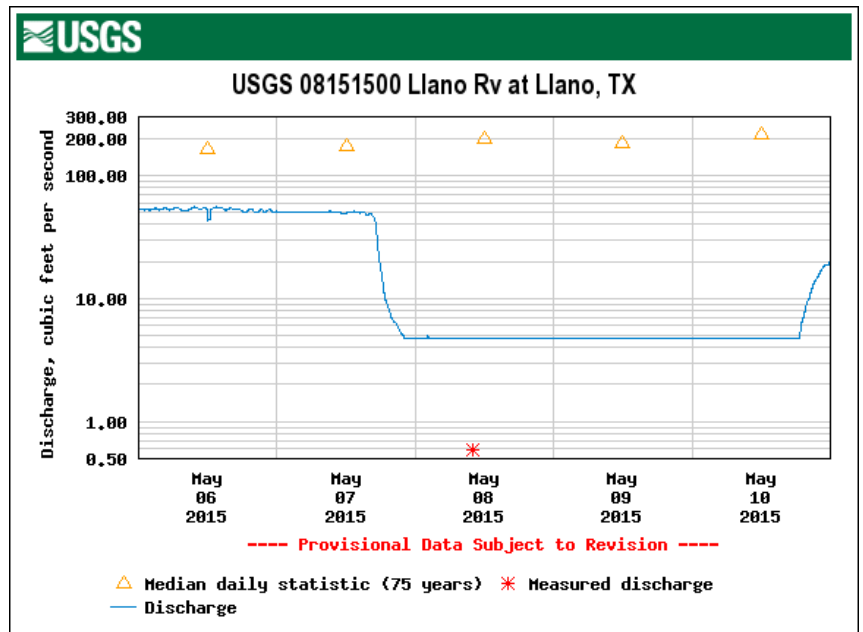
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Can the City of Llano legally do this? Unfortunately, yes.

The City's water right dates back to 1914. It was not until 1985 that the State of Texas began to place environmental flow considerations on water rights.

Does this have to happen again? No.

The City could have left one of the gates on the dam partially open and the reservoir would have still refilled in a matter of a days. In the meantime, aquatic habitat would not have been so severely impacted, and tourist who came to Llano would not have had to endure a dry river.

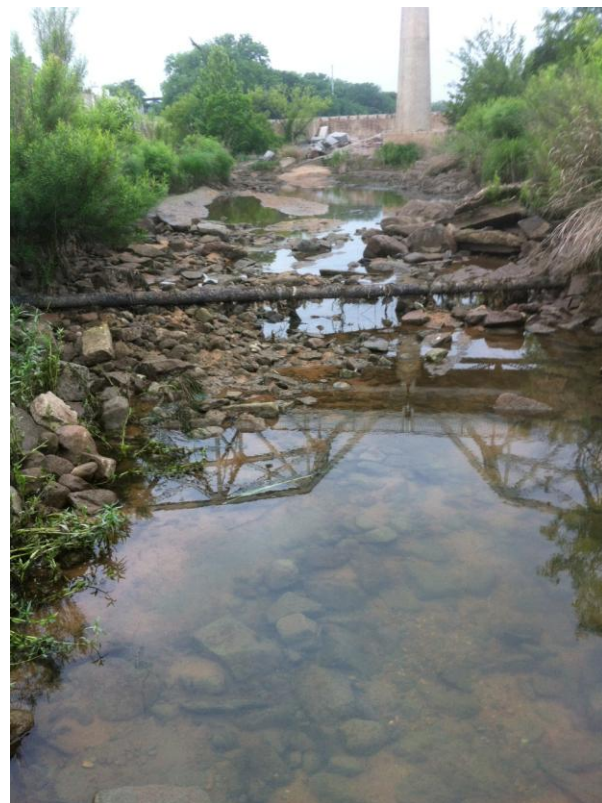


*The US Geological Survey measured discharge in Llano last Friday at 0.5 cfs. The river stayed at this low level for almost 3 days.*

The City has [a contract to remove sediment from the reservoir on an annual basis](#). Hopefully, in the coming years, Llano residents and the Chamber of Commerce will ask the City to leave one of the gates on the dam partially open so that residents, tourists, and fish alike may continue to enjoy the river.



*Llano River at 0.5 cfs last Saturday at foot of Ash Street in Llano*



*No flow in Llano River channel below bridge last Saturday*

## This Week: Well Tests available for Kimble, Edwards, and Real landowners

Local well owners will have the opportunity to have their [wells tested on May 19<sup>th</sup> in Junction](#) thanks to our local Conservation Districts.

**Sample bags must be picked up** from the Kimble County GW Conservation District (2<sup>nd</sup> floor Courthouse) **and returned on the 19<sup>th</sup> before 10am.**

Instructions for collecting and submitting the samples are [available here](#).

Don't assume that your well is OK. In June of 2013, at a [Texas Well Owner Network](#) workshop in Junction, **63% of the 43 local wells tested positive for coliform bacteria, with 13% testing positive for [e-coli](#)**

## AgriLife Extension's Living Waters Conference June 4 in Junction

The Llano River Field Station in Junction will be the site of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's [Living Waters Conference](#).

Conference participants will learn the latest techniques for managing watersheds and riparian areas in the western Hill County.

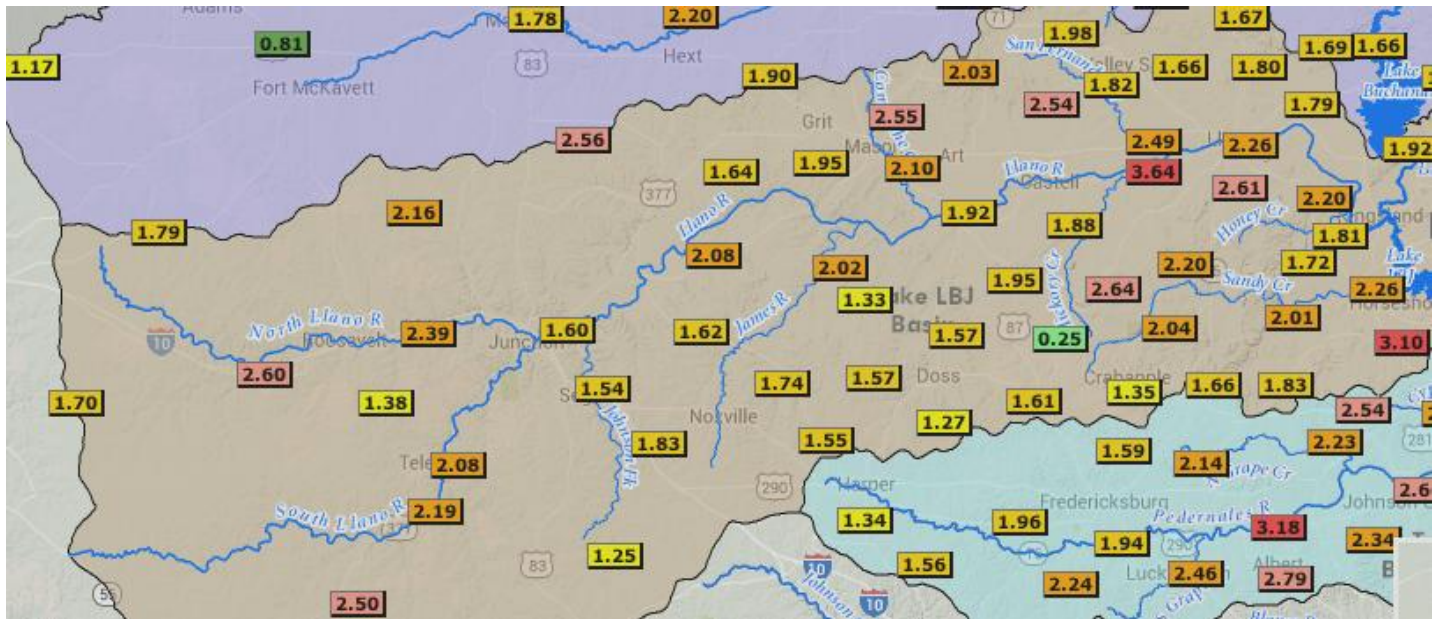
[Click here for an agenda](#)



*Rhandy Helton of Junction shared this picture of a young albino Ladder-back woodpecker at South Llano River State Park*

South Llano River State Park is featured in this month's Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine.

Check out [3 Days in the Field](#)

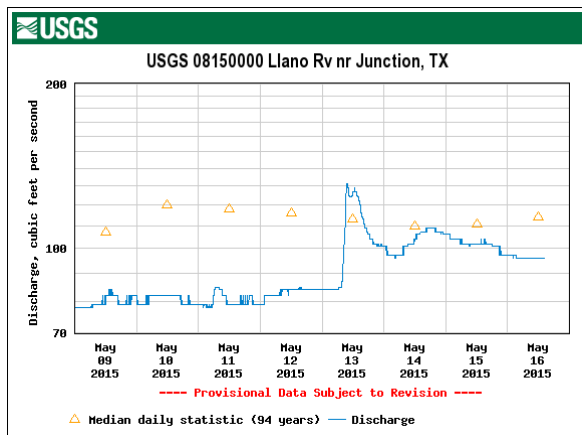
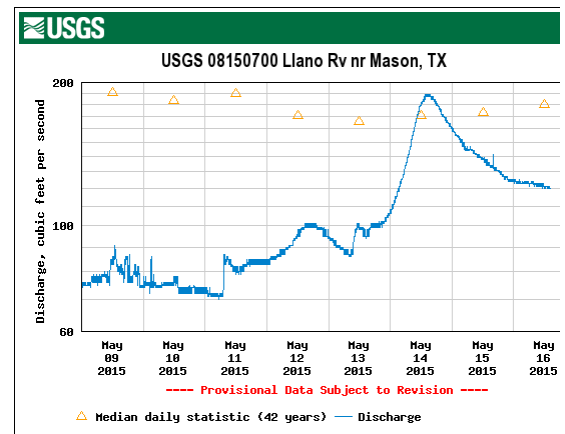


## Weekly Rainfall totals across the Watershed

Some nice rains fell across the watershed this past week. The biggest winner was Castell with 3.64 inches. Most importantly, over 2.5 inches fell in the recharge zones of the North and South Llano River.

The Llano at Mason began the week at about 75 cfs and is now flowing at 120 cfs.

The Llano River at Junction started the week at 68 cfs and is now flowing at 96 cfs



And as mentioned in our cover story, the Llano at Llano is now flowing at 203 cfs after starting the week off at 0.5 cfs.